

2025

MLK STUDENT SYMPOSIUM - VOICES OF THE DREAM: FOR US, BY US

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18

2:15 PM (EST) to 6:45 PM(EST)



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATION

2025 | CELEBRATING 45 YEARS



Please register by using the link or QR code below
https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2f2K8psLvvsCuCa

MLK COMMEMORATIVE MARCH

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

9 AM (EST) IM East

Reception hosted at the MCC immediatly
following the Commemorative March



For commemorative event information please click below
<https://spartanexperiences.msu.edu/about/mlk-conference.html>

or

<https://inclusion.msu.edu>

WELCOME LETTER FROM SYMPOSIUM CHAIRS

Greetings, Spartans, and Guests!

We welcome you all to the experience, which is the
MSU 2025 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Student Leadership Symposium.

Dr. King's dream continues to provide hope through
a lens of perseverance and promise. The dream
manifests itself daily as we not only seek our
purpose but live to fulfill it!

As we stand here years after
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech,
think of opportunities we have. Each of us stands
as a tangible example of the manifestation of
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream.
Thank you for attending and enjoy your
symposium experience.

KADEN JOHNSON

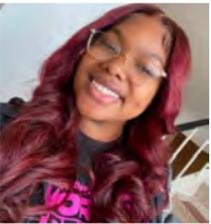
College Of Social Science



Kaden Johnson is a Third-year Economics student with a minor in Resource Management under the college of Social Science. During his time at MSU, Kaden has become heavily involved in student organizations and advocacy, serving as Vice President of Rising Black Men, Peer Mentor for the Detroit M.A.D.E. Scholars Program, and general member of the MSU Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In continuing his passion of being a resource to future generations, he is currently as the Undergraduate Chair for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration Planning Committee, supporting the creation & innovation of planning creative events dedicated to empower black students at MSU. In addition to these roles, Kaden will be entering a new role this summer as a Management Consultant Analyst at Accenture in their 2025 Summer Analyst Program, under their Strategy and Consulting practice. After finishing his Bachelor's degree, he hopes to thrive as a Business consultant, where he can continue his passion of being a resource to others.

JAKAIRA LYNN

College of Education



Jakaira Lynn is an alumna of Michigan State University, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in African Studies. Currently, she is pursuing her graduate studies in the Student Affairs and Administration program at Michigan State, where she also holds an assistantship with the Office of Spartan Experiences. Additionally, Jakaira serves as the interim program coordinator for the Upward Bound Scholars Program.

A proud Black woman and first-generation college student, Jakaira is dedicated to serving as a representative for Black students in higher education. As a daughter, sister, and friend, she aims to create a lasting impact by providing resources and guidance that empower students within her community. Through her work, Jakaira is committed to revitalizing the essence of Black joy, promoting intentional movements driven by love, kindness, and a deep sense of belonging.

MLK STUDENT LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM HISTORY

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Leadership Symposium was started in 2005 by a group of student leaders at Michigan State University. The symposium is an opportunity for current MSU students from diverse backgrounds to develop skills necessary to successfully transition from college to professional careers. Designed by students for students, symposium participants will practice organization skills, speech writing and public speaking skills, and networking skills. The focus of the MLKSLC aligns with Dr. King's social justice legacy. Students will learn how to express varying opinions about politics, social justice issues and techniques for engaging in dialogue that is constructive and demonstrates respect for our differences.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



DR. LECONTÉ J. DILL

DA scholar, educator, and poet, Dr. LeConté J. Dill is an Associate Professor of African American and African Studies at Michigan State University. Guided by Black Feminist epistemologies and using qualitative and arts-based research methods, Dr. Dill has a commitment toward transdisciplinary, community-accountable scholarship. Her work

focuses on the safety, resilience, and wellness strategies of urban Black girls and other youth of color.

Born and raised in South Central L.A., Dr. Dill earned her B.A. in Sociology from Spelman College, her Master of Public Health degree in Community Health Sciences from the University of California Los Angeles, her Doctor of Public Health degree from the University of California Berkeley, and was a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Health Policy in the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine. Her scholarship is critically informed by years of working in partnership with youth and community organizers, health educators, and policy advocates at community-based organizations and public health departments on issues related to chronic disease prevention, violence intervention, and juvenile justice. A Research Associate at the African Centre for Migration & Society at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, Dr. Dill also previously served on the faculty at several schools and programs of public health across the U.S.

Dr. Dill has been writing creatively from a young age. She was a Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop Fellow in 2016, a Small Orange Press Emerging Woman Poet Honorable Mention in 2019, and an Honorable Mention for the Zócalo Public Square Poetry Prize in 2021. Dr. Dill also integrates poetry into her ethnographic research with participants in what she has coined as “participatory narrative analysis.” Dr. Dill’s scholarly and creative works have been published in a diverse array of spaces, such as the Du Bois Review, American Journal of Public Health, Journal of Adolescent Research, Journal of Poetry Therapy, Poetry Magazine, The Feminist Wire, and Mom Egg Review.

Dr. Dill is deeply committed to teaching and mentoring. She actively works to amplify students as co-learners and co-scholars. Recently certified as a mindfulness instructor, Dr. Dill’s emerging work around “centering wellness” integrates meditation, poetry, and somatics for students, other researchers, and community partners.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



DR. RUTH NICOLE BROWN

Dr. Ruth Nicole Brown is the Inaugural Chairperson of the Department of African American and African Studies at Michigan State University. She founded Saving Our Lives, Hearing Our Truths (SOLHOT) in 2006 to celebrate Black girlhood. SOLHOT has received support from The Novo Foundation and other institutions.

A Whiting Foundation Public Engagement Fellow (2019-2020), Brown's Black Girl Genius Week (BGGW) expands SOLHOT's work, taking place in various locations since 2014. She has published two books and co-edited several anthologies.

Dr. Brown earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, with certificates in World Performance Studies and Gender and Women's Studies. She is also an artist, performing with the band We Levitate.

You can find Dr. Brown connecting with Black girls, creating knowledge about Black girlhood, and working on her project on Black girlhood and nature.

SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP PRESENTER



MICHAILA PAULATEER

Michaila Paulateer is a second-year medical student at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine with a strong interest in pursuing a career in surgery. Originally from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and one of ten siblings, Michaila has always been deeply connected to her community and values collaboration.

She earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from Wayne State University and currently serves as the president of the Student National Medical Association. In this role, Michaila is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within medicine while advocating for underserved communities.

With a passion for advocacy and health policy, Michaila's leadership and dedication reflect her goal of making meaningful contributions to the field of surgery and advancing equitable healthcare practices.

SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP PRESENTER



NEBIYAT M. GIRMA

Nebiyat M. Girma is a resilient health advocate with a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Chemistry and Psychology from Kalamazoo College, a Master of Public Health (MPH) from the University of Michigan and is currently an M.D. candidate at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine. Her research interests focus on improving health equity and access to care, with a particular emphasis on chronic conditions, epigenetic aging, and DNA methylation.

Having navigated academic and professional spaces where diversity is often limited, Nebiyat is deeply committed to fostering inclusivity and a sense of belonging for students of color in higher education. Her personal experiences have fueled her passion for mentoring others, advocating for systemic change, and creating pathways to success for underrepresented students.

SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP PRESENTER



ANGEL G. A. PREMPEH

Angel G. A. Prempeh was born in Ghana and emigrated to the United States when he was a teenager. He is an M.D. candidate at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine with a strong interest in orthopedic surgery. Angel has been actively engaged in research including projects exploring Achilles tendon injuries in the NFL, use of differential equations to model flu prevalence, and the disparities in orthopedic care access across Michigan. His research has been presented at national and international conferences and has resulted in peer-reviewed publications.

Beyond his academic pursuits, Angel is a leader committed to community service and global health. He co-founded Mobilize Africa, an organization that connects resources from hospitals in the United States to underserved regions in Africa. Locally, Angel is part of the East Lansing Emerging Leaders cohort, where he hopes to hone his leadership skills by learning about local government operations and their role in addressing community needs.

In his free time, he enjoys playing video games and working out.

SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP PRESENTER



SEAN HANKINS

For the last twenty-five years I have been the Director/Class Instructor for the Michigan State University Adolescent Diversion Program (MSU-ADP). The aim of this program is to reduce recidivism and divert adolescents in legal jeopardy from the juvenile justice system through advocacy and mentorship. The MSU-ADP program is a community-based

program operating in conjunction with Michigan State University and Ingham County Family Court Division. As the Director he supervises the strength-based intervention between the MSU student and youth. MSU-ADP has been acknowledged as one of the top juvenile justice programs in the country by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention [crimesolutions.gov](https://www.ojjdp.gov). I earned my B.A in Psychology and master's degree in Social Work from Michigan State University. In 2024, I was received the Diversity Equity and Inclusion award for both the Psychology department and the college of Social Science. I am a Field Instructor for the MSU Master of Social Work program. I oversee graduate student internships and helps them develop community-based programs. I have mentored over one hundred undergraduate and graduate students in the field of Social Science. I have several publications involving the impacts of community-based intervention on court systems, youth involved in court systems, and the influences that experiential learning courses have on undergraduate students and universities. I specialize in strength-based programing, positive youth development, SMART Goal planning, healing centered engagement, trauma informed care, criminogenic factors, boys to men mental maturation, the influences of ACE's, and the trauma responses of adolescents. I have developed and facilitated several programs for the Ingham County Family Court Division and Michigan State University, The Learning Club (TLC) children exposed to domestic violence; Strengthening Teen Relations and Inspiring Valuable Experiences (STRIVE) male juvenile sex offender program; and Youth Athletics Training Academics (YATA) alternative education mentor program for court involved youth. I've held several Boys to Men discussing Man Box, Rape Culture, Toxic Masculinity, and Pied-Piper; influences through audio and visual communications. During my journey from student to director to program developer, I have advocated on behalf of youth educational, equal opportunities for prosperity, inclusivity and combats hidden and invisible powers. I have dedicated my mission to provide opportunities towards success for students, youth, and staff and communities I work in.

SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP PRESENTER



DR. DORINDA CARTER ANDREWS

Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews is a professor of race, culture, and educational equity in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University. Her research is broadly focused on Black education and racial equity and justice in P-20 learning environments. She utilizes critical racial and Black feminist/womanist frameworks and methodologies to

examine issues of race, culture, and power in schools. Dr. Carter Andrews works with school districts, universities, municipalities, corporations, and civic organizations on how to develop and maintain culturally responsive, inclusive, and equitable learning and work environments. She is a former industrial engineer, high school math teacher, and kindergarten teacher and has teaching experience in suburban, urban, charter, and independent schools.

In addition to numerous honors, Dr. Carter Andrews has given two TEDx talks on education – one entitled, “The Consciousness Gap in Education: An Equity Imperative” and another entitled, “Teach Kids to Be Eagles: Overcoming Educational Storms.” Her insights on racial equity in education have appeared in the New York Times, Education Week, and on WKAR, NPR, CNN, and other media outlets. Most recently she was named the Educator of the Year (2022) by the Lansing (MI) Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Distinguished Community Service (Theda Assiff) Award by the East Lansing (MI) Educational Foundation. Dr. Carter Andrews’s research and scholarship has also been published in several top-tier academic journals. She earned a B.S.I.E. from Georgia Tech, M.Ed. from Vanderbilt University, and an Ed.M. and Ed.D. from Harvard University.

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

Kaden Johnson

Undergraduate Student
College of Social Science

Jakaira Lynn

Graduate Student, Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education
(HALE) Master Student

2:45-6:45 PM (EST)

2:15 PM (EST) Registration/Check-in

2:45-3:05 PM Welcome, Introductions and Symposium Overview

**3:05-4:05 PM Introduction of Speakers, Kaden Johnson
Group Session: “Building Community” (facilitated large group
discussion), Dr. LeConté J. Dill and Dr. Ruth Nicole Brown**

4:10-4:15 PM Transition to Breakout Session

4:15-5:15 PM Breakout Sessions

(select one; attendees will choose their session in advance)

Session 1: “Being the Only: Navigating the PWI Experience”,
Michaila Paulateer, Nebiyat M. Girma, and Angel G. A. Prempeh

Session 2: “Checking on You: Mental Health & Wellbeing
in Challenging Environments”, Sean Hankins

Session 3: “Navigating Life at a PWI: Understanding Institutional
Racism and Advocating for Yourself”, Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews

5:15-5:20 PM Short Break

5:20 PM Soul Food Dinner

(opportunity for networking and informal conversations)

5:35-6:40 PM Showcase of Student Work/Performances
(students present creative work that reflects the event theme)

6:40-6:45 PM Closing Remarks and Thank You

2025 MLK COMMEMORATIVE MARCH

The Commemorative March will be held on Monday,
January 20, 2025, at IM East at 9:00 AM (EST).

Reception hosted at the MCC immediately following
the Commemorative March

The March will be hosted by
**The 2025 MLK Commemorative Student Committee Chairs
and MSU National Pan-Hellenic Council (Divine 9)**

2025 MLK COMMEMORATIVE STUDENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

We are so thankful for all the hard work and dedication of the 2025 MLK Commemorative Student Sub-committee of the 2025 MLK Commemorative Celebration Planning Committee. The conference could not have been implemented without your commitment to producing programming focused on honoring the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Thank you so much for your investment in your fellow Spartans and providing an exceptional celebration in honor of the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Simone Bibbs
Mariah Boateng
Tammye Coles
Sharron Reed-Davis
Ty Dawson
Kristie Feldpausch
Kaden Johnson
Jakaira Lynn
Rachael Pyram
Tacora Roach
Jason Worley

THANK YOU

The 2025 MLK Student Commemorative Planning Committee would like to thank the members of the historical lineage for creating the Student Leadership Symposium, the Commemorative March, and other student planned events during the MSU MLK Commemorative week celebration.

We are forever grateful for you creating the foundation for the work we continue today.

We would like to thank the Office for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (IDI), the overall 2025 MLK Commemorative Planning Committee, the Student Life & Engagement Division, Office of Spartan Experiences, Student Development & Leadership.

We would like to thank Associated Students of Michigan State University (ASMSU), Council of Radical & Ethnic Students (CORES), Council of Progressive Students (COPS), Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), Panhellenic Council (PC), Residence Halls Association (RHA), University Activities Board (UAB), the State News, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources (CANR), College of Arts & Letters, College of Engineering, College of Education, Recreational Sports & Fitness Services, MSU Union, Office for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, MSU Graduate School, College of Nursing, Office of the Provost, Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Office of Undergraduate Education, Student Parent & Caregivers Resource Center, College of Social Science, Office of Cultural, Access and Belonging in CANR, Broad College of Business, Office for Civil Rights and Title IX, University Health and Wellbeing, and Black Student Alliance

for their unwavering support of this conference.

We would like to thank our staff liaison to the 2025 MLK Student Commemorative Planning Committee, Tammye Coles, for her dedication and support of this endeavor. We would also like to

thank Kaden Johnson and Jakaira Lynn for serving as Co-Chairs for the annual

MLK Social Justice Student Leadership Symposium.

Thanks also to every symposium participant for taking time out to engage in the symposium to honor the enduring legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**THE 2025 MLK STUDENT COMMEMORATIVE
PLANNING COMMITTEE**



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

**DR. MARTIN
LUTHER KING JR.
COMMEMORATIVE
CELEBRATION**

2025 | CELEBRATING 45 YEARS

